

support from the state, local government, metropolitan planning and the business community.

Ms. MURRAY. I thank the distinguished Senators from Michigan, and I will be happy to work with them in conference on this important corridor project.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent the Senate move to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Madam President, is the order that we are in morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to 5 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Madam President.

SAFE TRUCKS ON AMERICAN HIGHWAYS

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Madam President, I commend Senator MURRAY and Senator SHELBY for drafting an amendment that is attempting to address the issue of safe trucks on American highways. This is an issue that has caused a lot of disagreement. I know it is a very controversial issue. I want to speak about it because my State is most certainly affected. But I think every State is affected by whether we have safe trucks on our highways.

We do not yet have an agreement on this issue that everyone can live with, but I think we are a lot closer than anyone thinks. I ask Senators MURRAY, SHELBY, MCCAIN, GRAMM, and the administration to work together to try to make sure we come out with regulations that will assure that we have the facilities and manpower to inspect every truck coming into our country, whether it is from Mexico or from Canada.

Second, we must make sure we have foreign-owned trucks and drivers meet U.S. safety standards, while ensuring fair treatment for our trading partners. That is our responsibility and our commitment under NAFTA.

Third, I think it is very important that we commit to providing the financial resources for the inspection stations and other border infrastructure. The administration asked for about \$88 million for this purpose. The Murray-Shelby committee report that is on the floor has more than \$100 million to

make sure we have the border inspection stations, without which we couldn't possibly comply with NAFTA.

If we have good regulations and the money to conduct the inspections, I think we can come up with language that will be acceptable to everyone and keep our commitment under NAFTA.

I voted for NAFTA. I support free trade. But there are provisions in the underlying bill that I think could keep the United States from keeping its commitment under NAFTA.

I also believe the Department of Transportation regulations are not quite strong enough to assure that we will have inspections of every truck. I don't think we have been able to fix this yet. I hope we will be able to work together on language that will assure that we will have real inspections, that will ensure safety on our highways, and comply with our commitments under NAFTA. I don't think we are there yet, but I think we are working on it.

I ask everyone to come to the table. Senator STEVENS has been a leader on this issue. Senator MCCAIN, chairman of the Commerce Committee, certainly is a leader on this issue. Senator SHELBY and Senator MURRAY as the chairman and ranking member of the Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee are leaders on this issue.

I am a member of the Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee as well as the Commerce Committee. But mostly I am a person who is going to be on highways where there is going to be a lot of NAFTA traffic. When we are looking at 8,500 Mexican commercial trucking companies having the authority to operate in commercial zones today, I think we are talking about a lot of Mexican traffic on our freeways. We want a lot of Mexican and Canadian commerce, as long as the trucks meet our standards. We have to assure that those inspection stations are there to make sure it happens.

In 1999, both United States and Mexican commercial motor vehicles made an estimated 4.5 million crossings on the border. Seventy percent of those were in Texas.

This debate is not merely hypothetical to Texas, nor to the other border States. The added burden of overweight and potentially unsafe trucks is a daily reality in south Texas.

The reason for low inspection statistics is the lack of adequate space to conduct safety inspections. Currently, the only permanent inspection facilities at the United States-Mexico border are at the State facilities in Calexico and Otay Mesa, CA. At the other 25 border crossings, Federal and State inspectors have limited access to the existing U.S. Customs lots.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration inspectors do not have the equipment nor the space they need to do the job. Those inspectors have space to inspect only one or two trucks at a time. The construction of dedicated motor carrier safety inspection facilities at or near the existing Federal bor-

der crossing would improve inspection statistics.

Working with the Department of Public Safety in Texas, we have identified funding needs of \$100 million to construct safety inspection stations. So it is very important that all of us focus on this issue and that we all look for a resolution of this issue.

I think we are very close, but we are not there yet. I hope everyone will come together either to fashion an answer right now in this bill before it goes out of this Chamber or agree that we will not do that now, that we will write something in conference, but most certainly we would not stand on the language that is in the underlying bill nor the language that is in the House underlying bill that was passed that would prohibit Mexican trucks from coming into the United States at all.

I think we can come up with language that will be acceptable to the administration and acceptable to our Mexican counterparts. But the bottom line is, we are not going to have unsafe trucks on our highways as long as I have a voice in the Senate, because we have standards. The whole concept of NAFTA was that we would have parity, parity of our truck standards with the truck standards of Canada and Mexico. That means there would be a level playing field in trucking company competition, so that there would not be an unfair advantage to another country and, secondly, so that there would be safety on all of our highways, to make sure we are not in any way discriminating against any country nor are we lowering the standards that we have in our country.

So I intend to be very active in this debate. I intend to be very active in bringing the groups together to try to come to that compromise. My bottom line is only one; and that is that there is parity, safety, and a level playing field for the truckers of our country and the countries in NAFTA with whom we trade.

ILSA EXTENSION ACT

Mr. SARBANES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the CBO cost estimate with respect to S. 1218, a bill to extend the authorities of the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 20, 2001.

Hon. PAUL S. SARBANES,
Chairman, Committee on Banking, Housing,
and Urban Affairs, U.S. Senate, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for the ILSA Extension Act of 2001.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contacts are Joseph C.